

# REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

March 23, 2004

## REVISED

The Honorable,  
The Board of Commissioners of Cook County

### ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairman Suffredin, Vice Chairman Silvestri, Commissioners Claypool, Collins, Daley, Gorman, Murphy, Peraica and Sims (9)

Absent: None (0 )

Also

Present: Commissioner Goslin; Darlena Williams-Burnett, Chief Deputy Recorder; Robert F. Hogan, Member of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board; Brandon Neese, Deputy, Cook County Clerk.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Your Committee on Legislation & Intergovernmental Relations of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County met pursuant to notice on Tuesday, March 23, 2004 at the hour of 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room, Room 569, County Building, 118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Your Committee has considered the following items and upon adoption of this report, the recommendations are as follows:

262776 COOK COUNTY CLERK, David Orr, by Gary M. Ryczyn, Director of Elections, transmitting a Communication:

requesting authorization for the Purchasing Agent to enter into a contract with **MICHAEL KRELOFF**, Northfield, Illinois, for professional services.

Reason: Mr. Kreloff will act as a consultant to the office of the Clerk in respect to initiatives in the Illinois Legislature and report on other introduced legislation at all governmental levels that impacts on the County Clerk's Office. Mr. Kreloff will advise the Clerk on implementation of procedural changes necessary to comply with new federal and state laws. Mr. Kreloff will serve as a liaison with the Cook County Board of Commissioners and the Cook County lobbyists on legislative matters. Mr. Kreloff will advise and assist on intergovernmental activities and projects.

New federal and state laws require implementation of provisional voting and a state wide voter registration file for 2004 all as a run-up to

substantial reinventing of Illinois election procedures in 2005 and 2006. The office will handle a continuing need for efforts to secure maximum financial support from the State of Illinois election fund and to enact laws ensuring appropriate administration of Cook County elections.

Mr. Kreloff has over thirty (30) years of experience in election law in Illinois. Mr. Kreloff supervised the Election Law Unit for the Cook County State's Attorney's Office and served as attorney to the County Officers Electoral Board. Mr. Kreloff has litigated on behalf of clients from both major political parties before numerous electoral boards, circuit courts, and courts of review. Mr. Kreloff has experience in the Illinois legislative process through advocacy on behalf of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, the Illinois Attorney General's Office, the Cook County Judicial Advisory Council, and the Cook County Clerk's Office.

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$45,000.00. Contract period: January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004. (524-260 Account). Requisition No. 45240014.

**\*Referred to the Committee on Legislation & Intergovernmental Relations on 12/02/03**

Chairman Suffredin gave a statement summarizing what Michael Kreloff did at the end of the last legislative session.

Commissioner Peraica asked whether Mr. Kreloff was involved in supervision of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Bill implementation and obtaining funding under the Federal mandate for the amendments that will be implemented not only in 2004 but also in 2005 and 2006 for the Cook County Clerk's Office.

Brandon Neese, Deputy, Cook County Clerk, responded in the negative. He stated that the County Clerk's Office was involved in the actual operational aspects of the HAVA Bill. Mr. Neese stated that during the past election provisional voting was implemented for the first time. He stated that there was a need to understand all aspects of the new law; Mr. Kreloff assisted the Cook County Clerk's Office in putting together the procedures for the implementation of provisional voting in the Cook County Clerk's Office. He stated that the actual operation is done by staff from the Cook County Clerk's Office.

Commissioner Peraica asked whether the Cook County Clerk's Office anticipates Mr. Kreloff's annual contract to be continued from year to year indefinitely.

Mr. Neese stated that it would depend on the Cook County Clerk's Office's needs, and that it is hard to judge what the needs of the Cook County Clerk's Office will be in 2005 and 2006.

Commissioner Peraica asked whether the Commissioners would be informed of any substantial reinventing procedures for the 2005/2006 Illinois Election involving Mr. Kreloff.

Mr. Neese stated that he doesn't anticipate any changes. Mr. Neese further stated that Cook County will be purchasing new election equipment by 2006 and there may be issues that would have to be dealt with in Springfield regarding the certification of electronic voting equipment.

Mr. Neese also stated that Mr. Kreloff is the Cook County Clerk's liaison with the State Board of Elections which is implementing all of the regulations associated with the state HAVA Bill.

Commissioner Claypool asked whether there is a mandate to switch to electronic voting in the next election.

Mr. Neese stated that there is no mandate to switch to electronic voting, however, Illinois has opted to be part of the punch-card buy-out; therefore Cook County will be required to purchase election equipment in 2006. He further stated that Cook County is required to have one machine in each polling location that is accessible to the disabled. In conclusion Mr. Neese stated that the Illinois HAVA Bill requires a voter-verifiable paper trail.

**Commissioner Gorman, seconded by Commissioner Daley, moved Approval of Communication No. 262776. The motion carried.**

264382 COOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S MERIT BOARD, (REAPPOINTMENT). Transmitting a Communication, dated February 19, 2004 from Michael F. Sheahan, Sheriff of Cook County:

Please be advised that I wish to reappoint Mr. **ROBERT F. HOGAN** to serve as a member of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board effective immediately. Mr. Hogan's term will expire on the third Monday in February, 2010.

Pursuant to Chapter 55ILCS5/3-7002, I hereby request the advice and consent of the Board of Commissioners relative to the appointment of Mr. Hogan.

**\*Referred to the Committee on Legislation & Intergovernmental Relations on 03/09/04**

**Commissioner Daley, seconded by Vice Chairman Silvestri, moved Approval of Communication No. 264382. The motion carried.**

264401 RECORDER OF DEEDS, Eugene "Gene" Moore, transmitting a Communication:

requesting authorization for the Purchasing Agent to enter into a contract with **FLETCHER, TOPOL, O'BRIEN AND KASPER, P.C.**, Chicago, Illinois, for consulting services and lobbyist strategies.

Reason: Fletcher, Topol, O'Brien & Kasper, P.C. will provide the Recorder of Deeds' office with legislative consulting services and lobbyist strategies, including a weekly written report to the Recorder of Deeds as to the existence and status of all legislation.

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$55,000.00. Contract period: January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004. (527-260 Account). Requisition No. 45270003.

**NOTE: This item was deferred at the January 22, 2004 Board Meeting.**

**\*Referred to the Committee on Legislation & Intergovernmental Relations on 03/09.04**

Chairman Suffredin asked Darlena Williams-Burnett, Chief Deputy Recorder, to give the committee a brief explanation regarding the contract with Fletcher, Topol, O'Brien and Kasper, P.C.

Commissioner Daley asked whether the lobbyists for the Recorder's Office work together with the Cook County lobbyists.

Mrs. Williams-Burnett stated that the Recorder's Office does inform their consultants who the consultants are for the Cook County Board. She stated that they are advised regarding legislation that the Recorder's Office is opposed to and also consult with the President's Office.

Vice Chairman Silvestri asked whether it would be a problem for the Legislation & Intergovernmental Relations Committee to receive a copy of the weekly report that is issued by Fletcher, Topol, O'Brien and Kasper, P.C.

Mrs. Williams-Burnett responded that it would not be a problem.

Vice Chairman Silvestri suggested to the Chairman that all of the lobbyists should submit a copy of their reports to the Legislation & Intergovernmental Relations Committee.

Chairman Suffredin stated that he would write to each of the offices requesting copies of the reports.

Commissioner Gorman asked how soon the Commissioners would be receiving the reports.

Chairman Suffredin stated that he would request them immediately.

Commissioner Sims stated that she would like to find out whether receiving the reports every week or once a month is a reasonable time frame.

Chairman Suffredin stated that it depends on how they are requested to report under their contracts.

Commissioner Collins stated that the Board needs to stop opposing initiatives put forward in the General Assembly. Commissioner Collins further noted that it causes confusion if everyone is not on the same page.

Chairman Suffredin stated that the only way to avoid that problem is by putting forth resolutions to the Cook County Board; if the Board votes issues up or down, that would give direction to the lobbying team in Springfield. Chairman Suffredin further stated that the Board needs to begin to look at bills for specific concepts and to get input from the staff so that the County could have a unified team.

Commissioner Murphy stated that receiving the reports quarterly is not frequent enough. She suggested that the reports should be received monthly in order for the Commissioners to be hands on.

Commissioner Peraica asked why the Recorder's Office needs its own lobbyist.

Mrs. Williams-Burnett stated that she is not suggesting that the Recorder's Office can't use the County lobbyists, but that in the past the lobbyists that worked for the Cook County Board followed a number of legislative initiatives and proposals that would not benefit the Recorder's Office. Mrs. Williams-Burnett stated that during this session and last session the Recorder's Office had several proposed Bills that would have an impact on the Recorder's Office. Mrs. Williams-Burnett further stated that in the past they have found that the Cook County Board Lobbyists do not follow the issues that will impact the Recorder's Office.

Commissioner Peraica asked if the Recorder's Office has asked the Cook County Board Lobbyists to follow their issues.

Mrs. Williams-Burnett stated that the Recorder's Office does communicate with the President's Office and the President shares with the lobbyists what issues are of concern to the Recorder's Office, but that the Recorder's Office has specific lobbyists that focus only on issues that impact the Recorder's Office.

**Commissioner Collins, seconded by Commissioner Murphy, moved Approval of Communication No. 264401. The motion carried.**

**Commissioner Peraica voted Nay on the above item.**

264410 A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE HOUSE BILL 4100, THE RENTAL HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM (PROPOSED RESOLUTION). Transmitting a Communication sponsored by Larry Suffredin, Cook County Commissioner; Co-Sponsored by Roberto Maldonado, Cook County Commissioner.

#### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE HOUSE BILL 4100, THE RENTAL HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS**, Cook County is committed to respect the human rights of all people, including the right to adequate housing for all; and

**WHEREAS**, an affordable housing crisis exists in Cook County as evidenced by the fact that there are 191,260 households in Cook County earning less than 30% of area median (\$22,500 for a family of four) who are rent burdened, meaning they pay more than 35% of their income for rent; and

**WHEREAS**, 7,280 households are on Cook County Housing Authority waiting lists for public housing and housing choice vouchers; and

**WHEREAS**, HUD's fair market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment in Cook County is \$951.00; and a household in Cook County earning 30% of area median income can only afford to pay \$515.00 a month for rent; and

**WHEREAS**, House Bill 4100, the Rental Housing Support Program, which is currently pending in the Illinois General Assembly, would alleviate the affordable housing crisis in Cook County by creating a rental subsidy program for households earning less than

30% of area median income funded by a new \$10.00 state surcharge for the recordation of any real estate related document and such surcharge would be evidenced upon collection by a state seal from the Illinois Department of Revenue; and

**WHEREAS**, the program created by HB 4100 is modeled after a very successful program in Chicago, the Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund and the Trust Fund has been in existence for over ten years and currently subsidizes over 2,000 units of housing in Chicago; and

**WHEREAS**, the passage of HB 4100 would result in an estimated \$14 million to be allocated to Chicago and Cook County housing agencies to provide rental subsidies; and

**WHEREAS**, the passage of HB 4100 would result in at least 1,600 new units of affordable housing in Cook County; and

**WHEREAS**, HB 4100, would create a new \$10.00 state surcharge on real estate recordings to fund the Rental Housing Support Program, with Cook County to receive \$1.00 for every affected filing generating an estimated \$1.2 million to go directly to the County's general revenue fund to cover the County's costs for collecting the fee created by the bill; and

**WHEREAS**, all of the funds generated in Cook County through the collection of the surcharge will go to serve low income households in Cook County; and

**WHEREAS**, Mayor Richard M. Daley and the City of Chicago are in support of HB 4100 and urge the passage of the measure.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Cook County Board of Commissioners that the Board does hereby declare its support for House Bill 4100 and urges the members of the Illinois General Assembly to pass House Bill 4100, and in sequence, to urge the Governor to sign the measure into law.

**\*Referred to the Committee on Legislation & Intergovernmental Relations on 3/09/04**

Vice Chairman Silvestri assumed the Chair.

Chairman Suffredin stated that an amendment was distributed to the Commissioners which is amending the "Therefore" clause to reflect support for the concept of rental housing program and to encourage the General Assembly to pass House Bill 4100 after adoptions of amendments as proposed by Cook County. Further, Chairman Suffredin stated that the purpose is a technical issue that has been raised by the State's Attorney's Office and others that does not affect the substance of the program but will answer some of the Commissioner's questions and will put Cook County on record in favor of the program.

**Chairman Suffredin, seconded by Commissioner Murphy, moved Approval amendment #1. The motion carried.**

Chairman Suffredin stated that the purpose of this amendment is to put the Cook County Board in favor of a state-wide housing rental program. Chairman Suffredin stated that County of Cook is responsible for many social programs, including healthcare. He stated that one of the areas that the County of Cook does not have direct responsibility for its housing. Further, Chairman Suffredin stated that this creates a state-wide program, a pool of money to assist renters in finding adequate housing. In conclusion he stated that the vast majority of the funds generated state-wide will deal with people in Cook County and the collar Counties, because Cook County has the majority of people who fall 30% below the median wages for the area.

Chairman Suffredin stated that he has a letter of support from the Illinois Association of Realtors that will be made part of the record.

Commissioner Gorman asked how alive House Bill 4100 in Springfield is.

Chairman Suffredin stated that currently House Bill 4100 is in the House Rules Committee, but that it is being discussed by a number of people in the House as an amendment that could be added to another bill.

Chairman Suffredin stated that what is happening with House Bill 4100 is that people have seen a need for a housing rental program. He stated that there are 8,000 people who can not get Section 8 vouchers within Cook County alone. Further, he stated that House Bill 4100 has been through the General Assembly for about three years and the format was to give Cook County the most dollars and create a process that was simple. Chairman Suffredin stated that under House Bill 4100 the County of Cook could be the receiving agency. In conclusion, Chairman Suffredin stated that Cook County needs to go on record as being in favor of this program.

Commissioner Daley stated that he strongly supports the ordinance as amended.

Vice Chairman Silvestri asked if the amendments that are being discussed reflect an interest by Cook County to administer the program and to receive the funds.

Chairman Suffredin made three points: 1) The State's Attorney has raised a technical issue about the way the bill is drafted, is the collection of the \$1.00 that is a fee on a fee and it is a constitutional issue that can be easily avoided. 2) The way the bill is put together, Cook County could become the agency that could administer the program. 3) Cook County needs to be looking for the way to make this the most efficient program possible so that Cook County can get the dollars immediately into the rental stream and help people with housing.

Commissioner Sims asked Darlena Williams-Burnett to speak on the issue of the collection of the \$10.00 and the position that the other Recorders throughout the State of Illinois have taken on the issue.

Mrs. Williams-Burnett stated that she would like to go on record as stating that Recorder Moore is not opposed to any type of subsidies for low income renters. She stated that Recorder Moore does have some concerns with the bill as it is proposed. She stated that he has been working with the attorneys to address these issues as well as trying to communicate with the sponsor of the bill.

Commissioner Daley distributed a second amendment to the "Therefore" clause which incorporates the language of amendment #1.

Vice Chairman Silvestri stated that the amendment reflects some concerns that some members are addressing including the concerns of Mrs. Williams-Burnett.

Commissioner Goslin asked if House Bill 4100 applies to every county in the State of Illinois, whether every county would be required to put a \$10.00 fee on real estate transactions.

Chairman Suffredin responded in the affirmative.

Commissioner Goslin asked whether there is any provision that a county would be able to opt out.

Chairman Suffredin responded no.

**Chairman Suffredin, seconded by Commissioner Daley, moved Approval of amendment #2 (attached). The motion carried.**

**Chairman Suffredin, seconded by Commissioner Murphy, moved Approval of Communication No. 264410 as amended. The motion carried.**

**Commissioners Gorman and Peraica voted Nay on the above item.**

Vice Chairman Silvestri called upon the registered public speakers.

1. Ellen Sahli, Senior Program Director, City of Chicago
2. Julie Dworkin, Associate Director of Policy, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless
3. Aretha Brown, Community Leader
4. Floyd Turner, Community Organizer with L.C.D.C.

**Commissioner Daley moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Murphy. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Committee on Legislation &  
Intergovernmental Relations

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Larry Suffredin, Chairman

Attest:

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Michelle Harris, Secretary